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THE HIGHLANDS

G. R. T. ROSS

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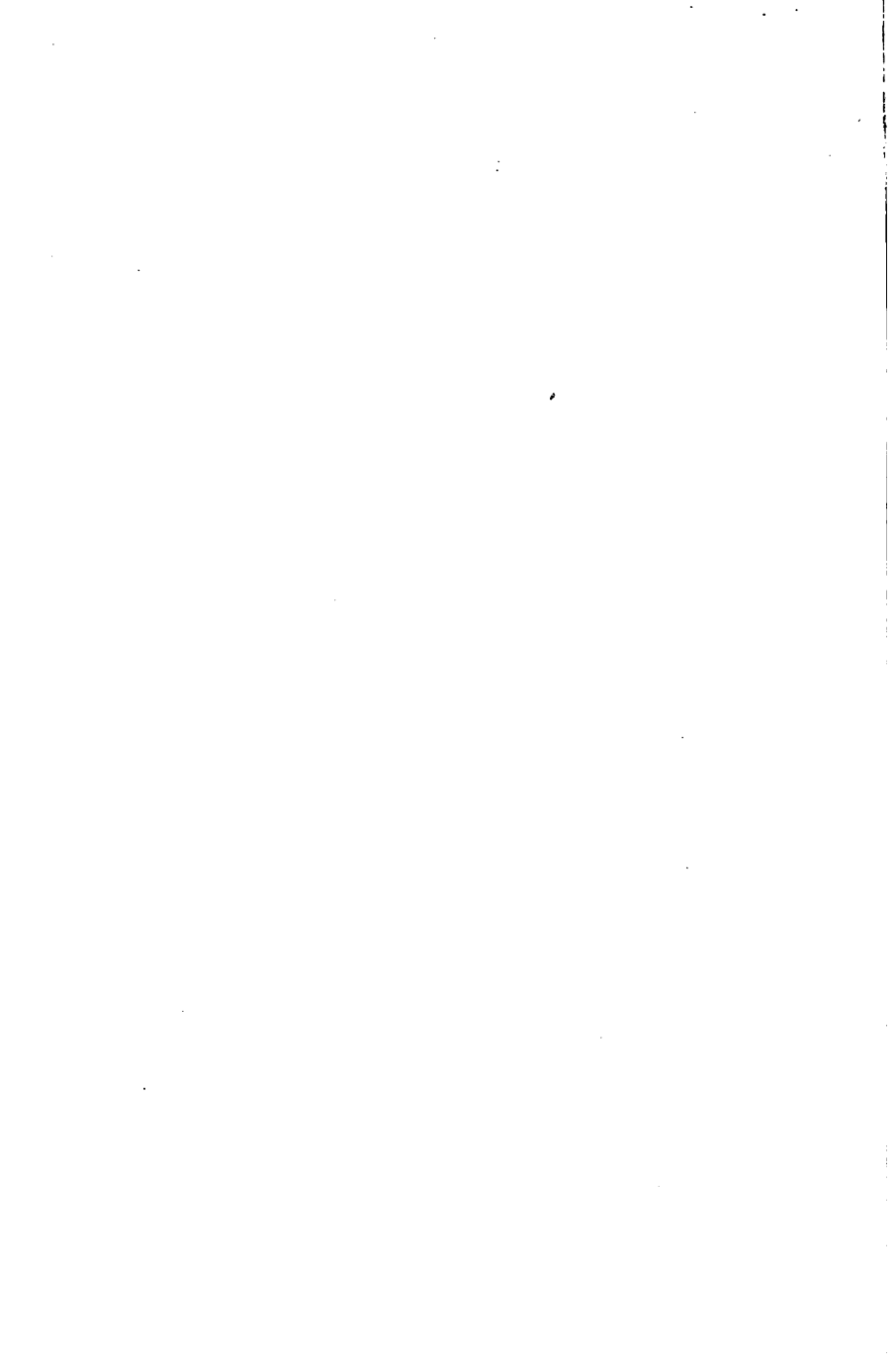
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In the Highlands



In the Highlands

And Other Poems

BY

G. R. T. ROSS



ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher to Her late Majesty Queen Victoria

PAISLEY; AND PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON

1902

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Dedication.

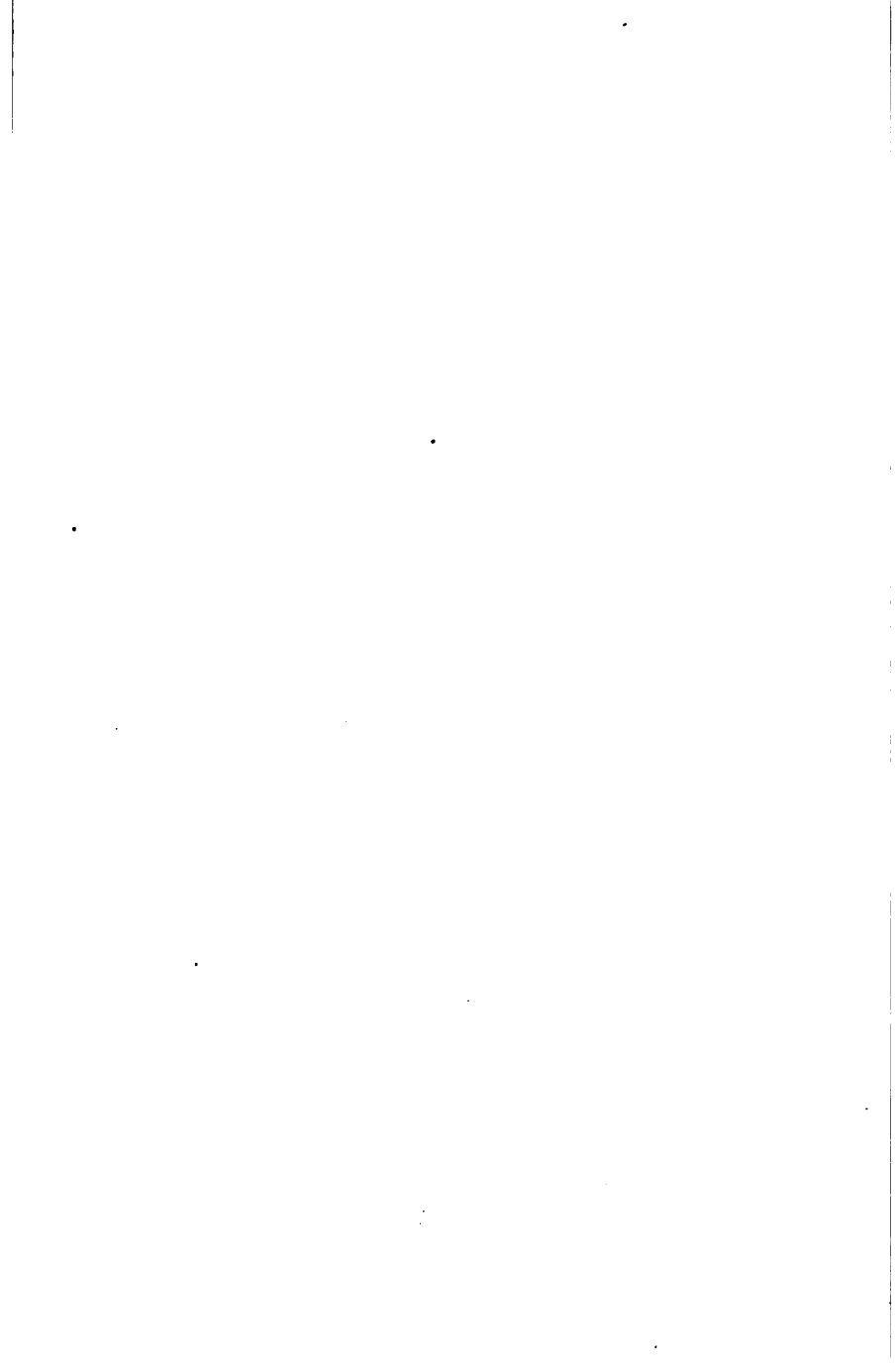
TO WILLIAM BAYNE.

*To you this hoary, haunted town,
Your old life of the scarlet gown
Doubly endears,
And happy memories must crown
Your former years.*

*Me no such ancient homage binds,
Yet here my heart contentment finds
In everything—
Good fellowship, the play of minds,
No wearying.*

*And what more can the heart desire
Than a fair friendship ne'er will tire
Till we're in shrouds,
Steadfast as St. Salvator's spire
Confronts the clouds?*

St. Andrews, 1902.



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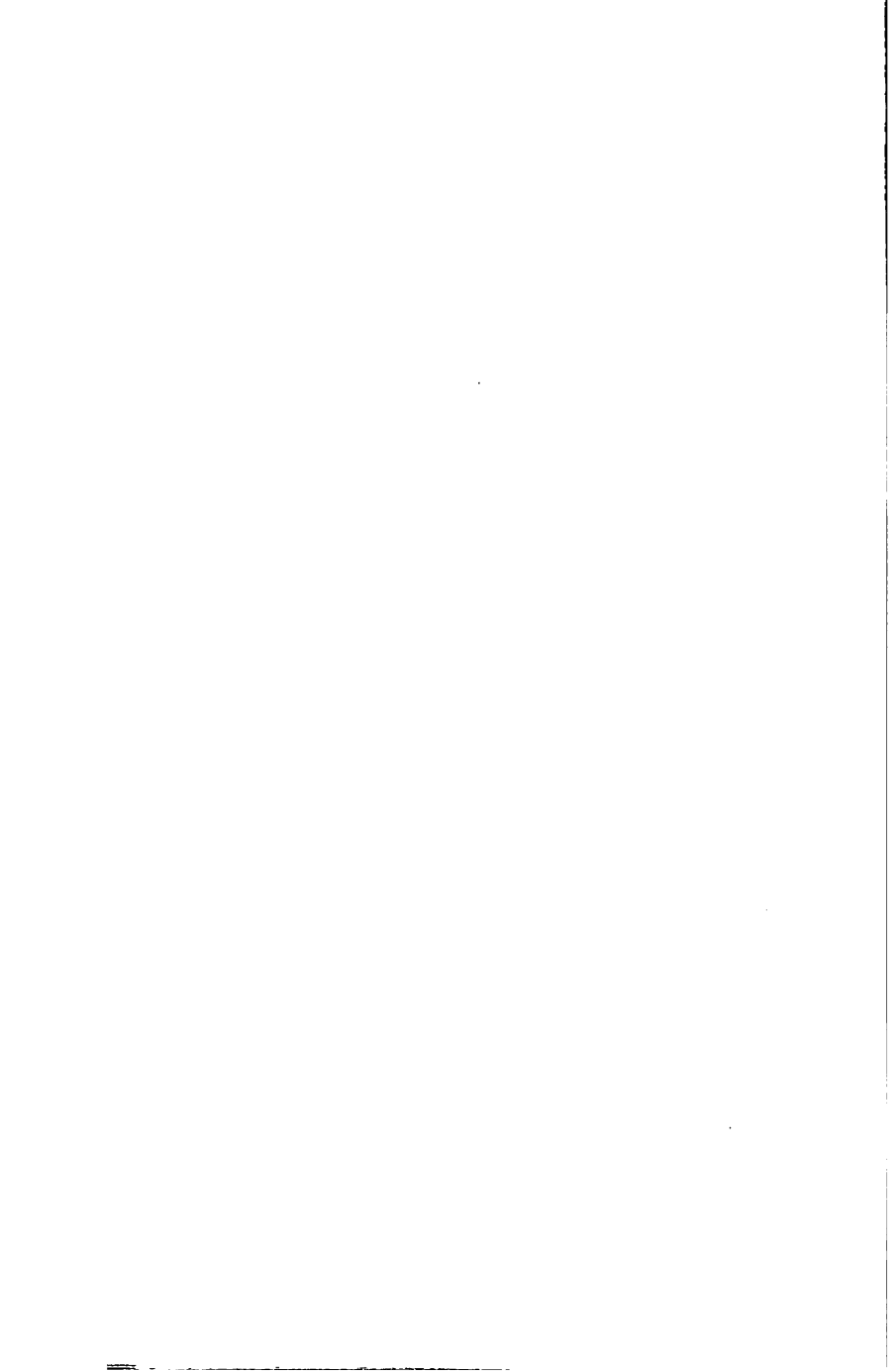
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IN THE HIGHLANDS.

PROLOGUE.

LAND of all my happiest moments ! Land, O land
delightfullest !

To the weary plain's dull dwellers, those that in the
town are prest

By the trivial, by the heartless, by the sordid social
quest,

Hemmed by prisoning greygrim cares that, like the
stones of stubborn grain

Which enwall and pave their life's way, ache their
limbs, their vision pain !

Land, O ! land whose winds and waters, skies and
sunlight all are pure,

Wherein bathing surely deem we all our woe to
cleanse and cure !

O, ye mountains of my country ! loved and lovely
Highland hills,

But to think of you is always an assuagement of our
ills ;

Hills whereon the heart of poet happiest is when it
can rove,

With emotion how heart-lightening, gladlier than
treasure trove

Have we hailed you in our wanderings, when upon
our sight you hove !

Though the view was oft-times only of our labour
the reward,

Slumber short amid our sorrow, brief release from
duty's guard.

But the vision ! O to tell it ! Over gleaming
country green

Rise your brows of maiden smoothness, airy-azure,
fair and clean :

Like a sea of bluest billows, free and frolic far they
spread,

While above the bouncing wave-tops here and there
lo ! rears a head,

As it were of great sea monster ('tis some mighty
peak sublime)

Sporting o'er the main primeval in the infancy of
time.

But perhaps comes dismal winter, and beside the
sullen plain

Lie the hills, like hounds half sleeping, surly,
couching ; or when rain

Blurs the bleak snow-spattered landscape, lean and
cowering they retreat,

Kennel shuddering 'neath the shelter of the fog-
cloud dense with sleet ;

Or, when in the arid frost-time like steel knives they
cut the sky,

O'er the shoulders of the ranges blue and bare that
nearer lie

You may see a lone white mountain like a starv'd
gaunt wolf pry.

Then the dweller in the city hugs his comforts more
content,

In the foul but sheltered alley o'er his commerce to
be bent,

Than to roam a hungry country with a hungriness
of soul

That can only feed on pleasure, and knows not the
joy more whole,

Though half-sadness, that to those to whom the
first flush of their life

Is a slain and ruined sun-burst, though they yet
maintain their strife,

Scorning sordid satisfaction, still may be their
struggle's meed,

As they watch the long days thorough, when upon
the hill-tops feed

Clouds and mists, the east wind's cattle, that the
storms of winter drive ;
Or when comes the quiet snow time, and wild
creatures sparely thrive,
And the snow, a silent ocean, isles each household
far apart,
And the birds seek sanctuary by the doors with
trustful heart,
Then to watch the tiny dramas of eyes bright and
bosoms warm !
Or a sterner tale to read in simple incidents of
storm !
But now let me tell the rapture the unblunted spirit
knows,
When, escaped from winter duty, it to summer
revel goes,
Such I've felt when, labour over, in the season of the
rose,
After the long lowland journey I at eve the hills
come near.

In a long array the brae-tops, purple flushed or
 cresting clear,
'Gainst the sky from sunset vivid, steadily the plains
 confront,
Like our ancient Scottish spearmen in their solid
 schiltrom wont
To withstand the Southron onslaught. Up the
 height's majestic flank
Clamber the last lowland homesteads, pastures fair
 and trees in rank.
Till the dim moor, dark with heather, takes them in
 its wide embrace.
But the mind can swiftly wipe from off the ancient
 country's face
All the feeble few adornments Time has scattered
 on the place ;
And we yet might see the clansmen from the mosses
 deep emerge,
Rush in bands upon the pastures and upon the kine
 converge,

And a clamour fills the country, wail for creach and rapine fell—

But not now of ancient war is deed to do or tale to tell,

For the Highland bands are void ; the tartan wraps the breast no more,

Hearts now feel the fire but faintly that their fathers knew of yore ;

Yet when the deep pass I enter and the Highland folk I meet,

Something of the old-time wildness in their eyes I've seen to fleet—

Something 'twixt the light and shadow, like the tremor on a stream

That beneath the duskened woodland cuts the darkness with its gleam.

And around the Highland hills yet like the haze of eventide

All the mountains subtly linking, pearly fair or golden dyed,

Winds a web of song and story, though no coronach
now is cried,
Nor the pibroch loud resounding fills the straths and
valleys wide.

II.

Up the pass through which I journey springs the
road from point to point,
And the birch trees seem to foot it o'er the slope
with supple joint
Springing lithely up to heaven ; and the scents too
spring in air,
And the blood springs in the veins and, like the roe-
buck from his lair,
Spring my feet more nimbly forward ; then the
rugged summit gained,
Lo ! the loch before me flashing as with sunset richly
stained !

All the mountain landscape rolling, many a far-off
distant glen,
Distant hills with summits dim that guard the
homes of distant men.
And in some half-hidden corner nearer lies the
cottage sweet,
'Twixt the woodside and the water, destined haven
for my feet—
There to nest and thence to sally, wide to roam the
mountains o'er,
Thither fare the long day done with aching limbs
and sinews sore!
There from plunge in soundless sleep emerge
refreshed on morning's shore!
Months to be the wind's companion, months to be
the summer's friend!
See the river fresh salute me as it issues round each
bend!
Cattle on the lower pastures, sheep and deer upon
the hills,

Falcons hovering in the heavens, little fishes in the
rills—

All are dear ; the sequent flowers, changing colour of
the crops,

Bronze upon the bending barley, gold on oaten milky
tops.

Say not those are but gay vesture flaunted by a
heedless mind,

That beguile the idle fancies of a brain to sloth
inclined ;

Say not that those seeming beauties can reveal not
Nature's heart,

That the world to doom goes reeling while the
dreamer dreams apart,

That not even the wildernesses in their gloom and
silentness

Have a secret that our spirits may by poring fancy
guess,

Secret not of laughter truly, but of life's sublimer
mood—

Thoughts that give with all its sadness, comfort
sweet if understood.

Say not this is all illusion ! 'Tis a doubt 'gainst
which to pray,

Trusting that the heart that loved her Nature never
did betray.

And the faith of elder poets is not vain, for Nature
knows

All the history of our people, how amid those hills
they rose,

Fought with hunger and with hatred, loved and died
for kindred's sake ;

She 'twas gave them joy, and she too stilled in death
their bodies' ache.

So the hunter in the forest and the shepherd on the
hill

Gazing on the wasted sunset feel a peace their
bosoms fill—

They can tell not ; some dim surmise of the tender
mother's hand

Gives its summer to each creature, then its rest when
life is spanned.

And the narrow city's toiler wandered hither, when
he views

All the ample country rolling, older ampler life
renews,

Finds it purer like the rivers that unsullied ever fleet
Fresh as breaking dawn, and feels that even death
would here be sweet.

Secret are thy thoughts, O Mother! and our
destinies are veiled ;

Not within the deepening darkness, nor when morn-
ing grey hath paled,

Not amid the river's converse nor on lonely hillsides
writ,

Shall we find our fate revealed ; the feeble hopes
our lives have lit

Soon thou may'st put out for ever ; all our love may
fruitless be,

Yet must we be still believers and in all thy actions
see

The divine transcendent spirit, gives delight with
every breath,

Gives us summer, love and hope, and last all con-
summating death.

THE LOCH.

THE sun, the mighty smith, on high
As fast as e'er his strokes can ply
 His strength is raining down.
Beneath his oft-repeated blows
The loch like silver metal glows
 Amid the mountains brown.

No longer from the storm-worn peak
I see it lie, a sullen creek
 By gloomy heavens stained,
As though into its murky well
The melancholy of the fell
 And sombreness had drained.

For now 'tis a dazzling blank of light,
A monarch's crown bejewelled bright
 Upon the landscape's brow.
And the river too at all its fords
With the rapid play of silver swords
 Is gleaming even now.

Come to the lake of the bright sun-breeze !
Come to the lake of the birken trees
 And the cattle standing cool !
And watch the winds their fingers dip
And million waves with burning lip
 And front with splendour full.

The ripples sail in gallant fleets ;
Up the loch the squall-mark beats,
 A squadron crescent shaped.
Or, when calm lulls a bay undim,
Out from the shore the shadows swim
 Of banks in greenery draped.

Out on the lake in the lazy boat,
O'er watery palaces we float
 Woven of golden weed,
And warily for their treasure try,
The golden-bosomed trout so shy,
 Amid the flowering reed.

Look how he gleams like a golden bar,
Or rushes like a meteor star
 Down in the lucent deep.
And now he lies within our pow'r,
Fresh and beauteous as a flow'r
 A noble prize to keep.

Thus will we wage our pleasant quest,
Till waves are dabbled with the west,
 And then again are grey.
And the relapsing surface still
The stars and starry silence fill
 From furthest bay to bay.

NOCTURNE.

EVENING ! The stars are faint above us.
Night ! The green yet clings to the field.
Silentness ! Yet a voice is heard of waters ;
The hushed music of the streams paves the valley
 with song.
The pure river paved by day with lovely pebbles
Is paven now with the purer gems of the stars.
Sweet scents steal lover-like abroad
Silently in the dusk. A white mist rises
And pallid as a ghost creeps round the riverside
 trees ;
The waters are dim. Then again it vanishes—
Nought, nought more is there. Oh, the fair world,
 my God !

NOON.

A DEEP glow dwells in the frail ling bells
O'er-wove with gossamers' dew-like lustre ;
Around the red heath's fragrant cells
The bees in sounding squadron muster.
In billows o'er the moors abloom
Swells honeyed sunshine ; on the broom,
And on the birch tree's swaying plume,
In show'rs the bright star-twinkles cluster.

Up on the hill the fern is still
And glitters far through the deep mid-noon,
The cascades through the glen that spill
Sing softer and yet more soft their tune.
A fair nymph seems each shady pool
With foam-white bosom and fingers cool,
And eyes of liquid clearness full,
And voice with hushed melodious croon.

THE CORRIE.

UP in the corrie, far in the hills
Nought there is but broken rills
And a flowerless grass and mossbanks black
And the sheep's seldom trodden track ;
Rugged with chasm and boulder stone—
Such is the corrie, drear and lone.
The chill mists nightly haunt the place,
And on its furrowed tear-stained face,
As if it were to mourning cursed,
The weeping fountains ever burst.
Never, e'en on the sprightliest day,
Can the far corrie e'er look gay.
Yet here two lovers in love's glory,
(The country shepherds tell the story),
Lovers whose joy had reached its sum
Into this solitude would come.

Perchance in all the sadness round
A happiness more blest they found
Joying to prove their true love's worth
That made the wildest place on earth
As sweet a home as cheerful hearth.
And when her lover the vale must leave
To dare the world, 'twas oft at eve
The maid would seek the place of tryst
In loneliness to pray to Christ
To send her lover safe again ;
And he, in visits from the plain,
Would take this unfrequented pass
For nearness, or belike it was
He loved to journey by the way
Where all his happiest memories lay.
Ah, well ! With winter treacherous snow
Beset the passes high and low
With ambushade in gulf and scaur,
And the lover in the plain afar
Beheld the clouds in grim battalion

On Ferragon leaguered and Schiehallion.
But youth is bold, and the fond heart pines,
And he will dare to pass the lines
Of Winter's host. It was a day
Nigh Yule-tide, when a dreary grey
Scared beauty from the face of heav'n,
And where the fields of ice were riven
The lean and hungry land looked forth.
The numbing silence of the north
Couched on the snow-encumbered heather
Where million bees had sung together
When last he came, and where with zest
The moor-fowl crowed about its nest.
Now all that pleasant life was slain,
Streams at whose birth appeared a stain
Started from shattered banks of snow
And hurried to the vale below.
Deep in their pools the mangled wreath
Lay drowned the icy flow beneath.
Swift through the dreary solitude

The traveller sped with musing mood
Marking the way, yet most his thought
Turned inward and its happiness sought
Around his fair envisioned love.
He marked not how the hill above
Grew dense with mustering bands of cloud,
Or how the foraying snow squalls crowd
The defile's mouth. Confederate night
Drew earlier to the mountain height.
Oh ! piteous is the tale. Alas !
In the corrie, in the lonely pass
The dire marauders have him slain.
That night the maiden dreamed in pain
That on the hills her love lay dead,
And when the evil dark had sped
Up to the corrie lone she fared ;
The gulf, the tottering wreath she dared,
And there, with the snow's white arms around him,
In that sad trysting place she found him.
'Tis long, long since that bitter day ;

The maid has lain beneath the clay
Down by the clachan kirk full long.
Passed is the pain and passed the wrong,
E'en as yon bird's heart-piercing cry
Falling from where against the sky
The falcon hounds his hapless prey
A moment hence will die away,
The air be still as is its wont,
The day resume its tranquil front ;
For time must travel on its road
All heedless of the episode,
Cruel or glad, whate'er it be.
Yet 'neath the deep tranquillity
When comes nor voice nor sigh of breath,
There lurk the unheard words of death.
Whetted against the silence keen
The sense more subtle grown might ween
It pierced the secret of the hills,
Laid bare the hidden thought which fills
Each brow on yonder heads of gloom,

That heedless aye of human doom
Hold with the clonds their converse high
And commune with the eternal sky.

THE STRATH.

BLUE is the heav'n and blue is the river
And on haughs with blue-bells blue,
Another heaven seems to shiver
In pools of azurest hue.

Blue is the mountain's dreaming head
That the twinkling leaves between
Of pendent birch trees pillow'd
Over the wood is seen.

A soft wind from the sunny hills
That saunters through the strath,
The soul with honey and music fills,
With flowers every path.

O this is the time of the Summer's prime,
And the mild delicious weather ;
The honey-hued blossoms hang from the lime
And the blush begins on the heather.

O ! shall we up to the mountain top
That all Elysium seems,
Or down by the mossy fountain drop
And bathe in blissful dreams ?

O high and low, where'er we go
Or dreaming or awake,
'Tis all the same delight to know
One sweet dream without break.

THE SHEPHERD'S HOUSE.

IN the dark, in the dark the deer come down
From their secret haunts in the mountain brown,
For the sacredness of the lonely height
Wings downward with the failing light
And nestles in the vale with night.
So, round the shepherd's home,
With the moaning mountain winds they roam
And on my bed adoing I
Startle at the wild creatures' cry
In the night's dateless musings still ;
And stranger thoughts anigh,
Like those shy visitants from the hill,
Come from some starry stainless place
Or windy-haunted wilderness.

And when leaps up morn's active ray
To cleanse the stain of night away,
The mirthful moor-fowl by the door
Chuckling his jocund morning lore
Secure will strut, by all unheard,
Long hours till drowsy minds are stirred
And human business once more
Must drive away the gentle bird.

THE LOCHAN.

AMID the hill-tops, embosomed in moors around,
Worn like a jewel on a woman's dusky hair,
Silverly trembling or heav'n-hued the loch is found
The little lakelet where people seldom fare.

Far from the valley with corn fields and homes of
men

Lonely companion of sad-voiced birds,
Watching the dumb clouds passing from glen to glen,
Hearkening the hill wind's hollow words,

That sweet seclusion, how shall we come to it ?
Who tells the mystery dwelling there ?
None ; but the streamlet whose footsteps by flow'rs
are lit,
Guides us up o'er the hillside bare.

Upwards ! the wild flow'rs hymn the summer's glory.

The hare-bell, the thyme with tiny trumpet lips,
Are wide-mouthed all and tell-tale of the story ;
Chirring his lay the grass-hopper skips.

At last the loch, clear-eyed amid the moorland
brown,

Tranquil it gazes upward to the sky,
Like a mild maiden soothing away the frown
From off a brow where troubles darkly ply.

Down by the loch to lie in the heather deep
And gaze aloft on cloudy cusp and whorl,
Whence white flowers burgeoning soon will peep
And tendrils with pearly filament and curl !

To lie and look from far-away peak to peak !
That now above the lesser ridge confront
And seem in some still converse as if to speak,
Tones that to hear the sense is all-too blunt.

Would I could hear you, ye hills of eternity,
List to your colloquy high and strange ;
Men 'neath your shelter cling and then drop away ;
Ye through the ages never change.

Changeless and silent ! Strong are the silent ones,
Yea, and the lake that now is still,
Nor on the shore with battery futile runs
Is strong with the might of inscrutable will.

For the lapsing wave that lapses in silentness,
Giving one kiss to the idly hovering air,
Hath a terror—a horror of fate in its mute caress,
A secret it never to any will declare.

Comes at length eve, with its grey chills the purple's
heart,
Blackens the wave—the sedge sings shrill—
Sadder each lone flower watches the day depart,
Harsh scream the mews and then are still.

By the dim shore a presence of shadow-things
Stealing forth in the ample night to pry ;
Sudden, a rush as of doom on its rapid wings,
The wild-duck drops from the sombre sky.

So all through the bleak night gazed on by mournful
cloud
The loch lists the stir of the hidden wilder life—
The red deer, the fox, and the wild fowl with croak-
ings loud,
And the dark of a muffled bruit is rife.

Morn falls silent on moorland that mists benumb—
Night's hosts depart, day begins again,
The sky and the water resume their communion
dumb,
Voicing the destinies hid from men.

.

WINTER ON THE HILLS.

High on yon hill by the far march dyke,
 Deep lies the snow, and long has lain;
 Hidden each hollow and trenchèd syke
 By which we wandered and were fain.

Place where we trysted with happy thought
 Oft in the Summer long-light days !
 Home of sweet birds and a bliss unsought,
 Now all untrodden are your ways !

Almost forgot is the happy time ;
 Wild weather herds us on the plain.
 Comes there a season again to climb ?
 Shall we once more the old life gain ?

Sorrowful Winter will make more sweet
Joy that is tremulous still with woe,
Cry of the plover from bogs of peat,
Croon of the winds that ever blow.

SPRING ON THE MOUNTAINS.

THROUGH the wet dripping southern pass,
The solemn clouds come sailing slow ;
What care we though their laden mass
Descend in rain and stormy blow ?
For it's all begun again, my love,
The new time of the year !

'Tis Spring herself their course that steers
Like nereid on dolphins borne,
Sitting aloft ; 'tis thus she cheers
With largess the waste lands forlorn,
When it all begins again, my love,
The new time of the year.

Soon will the showers speed
Greyfoot across the hill ;
Like a pack of hounds new freed,

Look ! every mountain rill
Leaps down its whitening falls.
No longer chained to the ground,
The scents from moss and earth
Wander the air around,
And happy with new mirth
The moor-cock crows and calls.

The birds are paired upon the hill,
For love and joy are free again,
And hark ! the thrush's challenge shrill
Wake in the wood far down the glen !
For it's all begun again, my love,
The new time of the year !

The new time of the year !
Think of the pleasure coming !
At secret nests to peer,
To hear the first bee humming,
Blackbirds enrich the dusk !
While yet the woods are dark,

By little trodden ways

With sudden sight to mark

New born anemones

That faintly smell of musk !

Willows' silver-surpliced buds

Elm twigs with coral studs,

Pewits swooping o'er the braes,

Yellow whin begun to blaze,

Oh to see ! to see ! to see !

Where the primrose founts gush full,

Bathe our faces in their cool !

Scent of every flow'r that smells,

Sunbeams basking in the dells,

Oh to feel ! to feel ! to feel !

Every joy by poets told,

Joys that never can grow old,

Joys forgotten that arise

With an ever new surprise,

Oh ! they're all begun again, my love,

With the new time of the year !

THE MOORLAND.

THE peace of morn is everywhere,
The sun climbs softly up the steep
All overspread with cloud, the air
Is holden of a silence deep.

The distant hills whereon I gaze
Are steeped in gloom of deepest hue,
But here and there escaping rays
Make pools of sunlight in the blue.

A heavenly land it seems and blest
Where these bright sun-gleams come and go,
And wander o'er the mountain's breast
Or in the deep dells brood and glow.

Oh, that we were pure spirits twain
To bask in that transcendent blaze,
To slumber in the lonely glen
'Mid millions of anemones.

In many a mossy nook we'd peer
Where sorrel shines in soft retreat,
The violets' timid voice we'd hear
And drink the breath of cowslips sweet.

Or from the primrose banks we'd fly
And o'er the wide moor roaming go,
Where plovers call with wailing cry
And all the pleasant breezes blow.

As sunbeams pure would be our life
And as the westland breezes free :
And like a flower's, free from strife,
Yea, all that Heaven itself can be !

BALLAD.

A HIGHLAND TALE.

'Twas morning, and the sun uprose
The eastern hills among,
First like a burning mountain seen,
Then in the heavens hung.

And the tender-tinted filmy clouds
That a silken covering made
Above his unawakened couch,
Began to wane and fade.

Grey was the dew upon the grass
Beneath the steep brae-face,
And lingered yet the night's dank chill
In many a shady place.

The shadows of the trees lay
O, lovingly together
Along the mead, they almost touched
The cottage roof of heather.

The cottage where blithe Katie dwelt—
Katie, Glen Duan's queen—
And look ! she's coming from her door,
And pacing o'er the green.

She goes for water to the burn
Fed by the mountain dun ;
Her pails are swaying as she trips,
And flashing in the sun.

O, Katie is a lovely maid !
Her hair a dusky wreath,
Her brow pale as the birchen stem
Its budless twigs beneath,
And her cheeks have just the tender hue
That's on the pink-belled heath.

Her eyes they are so deep and dark,
Like pools in Duan's stream ;
Yet secret fire lurks in their depth,
As when the sunlight's beam
Pierces the waters' amber dusk
And the rocks' hidden gleam.

She paused to gaze upon the heights
The clouds all night had kept,
And trailing shreds of pearly mist
That from the hollows crept,
Driv'n by the sun's pursuing ray
From the couch were they had slept.

O, 'twas a glorious morning,
No stain, no sin was there,
And stainless was the maiden,
As innocent as fair.

But who is this that rides at speed
Adown the winding road,
Ere the dew hath left the clover
Or the workers are abroad ?

The metal of his polished casque
Is glittering like a star,
Yet he appears on nearer view
Clad more for peace than war.

'Tis the young chief of Duan's vale
Who rides away to court,
Well hath his mother nurtured him,
Strongly would she exhort.

" Be thou a man among the men,
Uphold thy father's fame,
And single out a bonnie bride,
With wealth and noble name."

The knight was thinking on those words
As up the hill he clomb,
And soon he spied that lovely maid
Come singing from her home.

Her beauty melted on his sight
As on the entrancèd ear
Delicious harmonies, and he
Rode by in wonder sheer.

He passed, but swiftly sprung regret
And ere e'en he could tell,
He turned him round to where the maid
Now sat beside the well.

“ O, fervent is the early sun,
And many a mile I've ridden,
And coolly sings the crystal stream
Among the hazels hidden.

“I fain would drink.” The maiden rose
And fetched a crystal cup,
And filled it at the white cascade
And to him handed up.

“O may the royal wines be sweet
And sparkle full as free,
But where shall I find Lowland maid
With laughing eyes like thee?”

So spake the youth with boyish blush,
The maiden hung her head,
And he in wonder at his words
Spake on encouragèd.

He asked her of her kin and friends,
The home where she was dwelling,
And love beneath those simple words
The stronger still was swelling.

But when the dew was off the grass
He wished her fair good day,
With "Chance may make us meet again
When I come back this way!"

So down the long glen he is gone
Into the morning's hush,
And far away his horse's steps
Fade in the river's rush.

But not as footsteps from the ear
Nor dew from off the grass,
Did from the memory of the maid,
The gallant chieftain pass.

But like the voice of Duan's flood
That murmurs night and day,
A stream of love-thoughts in her breast
Made music sweet alway.

.

'Twas evening, and the shadows lay
O, lovingly together
Across the shimmering corn ; they reached
Unto the purple heather.

A golden glory filled the wood
Where lined the mellow glades
The stalwart pines and fair-tressed birch
Like a throng of men and maids.

Like a fair garden lay the sky
Blossomed with cloudlets soft ;
Upon the distant peaks the mist,
Came creeping from aloft.

The mist was seeking for its couch
On the lonely mountain side ;
The birds were winging to the brake,
There all night to abide.

The sheep were bleating for their lambs
High on the heathery brae ;
And again the maiden by the well
Sat singing musingly.

And first 'twas evening joy she sang,
And the fireside's cheering sight ;
But a deeper yearning stirred her heart,
And she sang of love's delight.

She thought upon her gallant knight
Who down the glen had gone ;
She turned and looked—and up the road
He riding came alone.

Quickly he came, then sudden paused
As he the maid descried ;
Then nimbly vaulted from his steed
And lowly knelt beside.

“ Oh ! maiden, maiden ! lovely are
Glen Duan’s hills to see ;
To me as homeward I return,
But fairer deem I thee.

Full oft amid the Lowland plains,
Where sluggish waters sleep ;
I’ve longed to see my fair blue hills,
And heathery braes so steep,
And glens wherein the white cascades,
From the rocks gleaming leap.

And when I talked with courtly dame,
Or damsel bright of blee ;
’Twas for thy merry voice I longed
And smile so bright and free.

And oft I thought that though the quest
Of fortune made me roam ;
In truth my fortune wholly was
With thee, fair maid, at home !

O, be my bride ! Thou art the queen
Of beauty of this dale ;
Thou'lt be its queen in very sooth,
If but my words prevail ! ”

O, she has looked into his eyes,
Seen there but honour true ;
She's turned and looked upon her home,
What could the maiden do ?

But when the sun had sunk from sight
She vowed to be his bride ;
And he has set her on his steed,
Mounted himself beside.

And up the glen his horsehoofs beat,
Faster his young heart keen ;
As homeward to his hall he bore,
Katie, Glen Duan's queen.

SUNSET.

Down the corrie, down the burn
Comes the song of eve descending,
And the wailing bees return
From the heather homeward wending ;
All the rosy bloom with rose-gleams
From the western rose transfused ;
All the pines and sister birches
In the glory stand bemused ;
Sweet is home for day is ending ;
Day had sweets but they are used.

Showed the stream her wealth all day,
Silver founts and diamond drops ;
Silver cascades seemed to play
O'er the sparkling birch-tree tops.

Waters, waters ever running !
Happy creatures in the shade !
Hills that bear the summer's standard
On your towered heights displayed !
Now the day's long rapture stops,
Change's laws must be obeyed.

Beating silver of the linn !
Light unutterable shed !
Ye are deep my heart within,
And ye hills with heather red !
It were heav'n if only alway
I could see you, waters, pour,
And into the sun-cleansed azure,
You ye lofty mountains soar,
If a will Almighty said
Thus it should be evermore.

But in peace the day is borne
Golden-biered into the west,

And the passionate joys we mourn,
Sink like hushing winds to rest.
Flies that die when dies the daylight,
Bees that die at summer's close,
Birds that watch the waning sunshine,
Seem to bless the day that goes ;
Death is home and home is best—
Love and unperturbed repose.

THE MIST.

THE mist is over hill and dale,
There's not a voice in all the land ;
The mist is heavy in the vale,
The wave is silent on the strand.

A dull presage dwells on the mind,
The birds, the humming flies are hushed ;
The torrent in his gorge confined
With quieter hurry never gushed.

The grasses and the gossamers
Have filled their nets with silvery spoil ;
And slowly from the sombre firs
The drops fall as though wrung with toil.

The mist is over hill and dale,
Perhaps some wanderer on the wild,
Roams lost beyond all human hail,
As by a spell bewitched, beguiled.

He treads the charmed circle round,
The old seems new, the new seems old ;
The mist sleeps silent on the ground,
A languor on the sense is rolled.

The mist is over hill and dale,
The eve goes homeward silently ;
Without a song, without a wail,
Strange the presage of such a day !

EPILOGUE.

COMES a time the purple heather's perfectness,
Is tarnish'd, and not another flow'r
Is seen to peer ; upon our hearts a dumb distress
Gathers like gathering cloud from hour to hour.

But yestermorn, when fitfully the peevish day
Started to life, woke with it a strange sound,
A murmur deep with tone of organ harmony,
In the pine's head that tops the rising ground.

The wise dark pine that overtops the lesser trees
Spake words of warning new unto the wood ;
Not it to feel the casual aspen-fluttering breeze,
And bow its head or tell its hidden mood.

But now it told the rout of summer's armies bright,
And lo ! all day came fleeing down the vale
Wild ruined blasts screaming delirious in flight,
Eve bloodshot-eyed pursued the tempest pale.

To-day has fallen a quietness on all the land,
The lake lies still beneath the unmoving boughs
Of trees that reach in yearning to the rocky strand,
Or guardian bend above the crofter's house.

One golden spray is mirrored in the river pool,
The bracken here and there reveals a flame ;
And the calm sunshine ever yet as beautiful
Would nigh persuade the season yet the same.

But, hear the robin singing by the quiet shore,
Sweet fall the notes upon the tranquil bay ;
The sage bird knows that summer's music all is o'er,
And plaintively begins his dirge to-day.

And all the autumn 'mid the dropping of the leaves,
Himself a red leaf on the branches sere,
He'll sit and pipe through many dulling dawns and
eves,
Instilling sadness in the listening ear.

"The old, old change o'ertakes the children of the
year,
And they must lose their laughter and their life;
The corn must quit the field, the dragon-fly the
mere !—"
Such is the descant of the robin's fife.

A longing for the sweets of summer o'er again,
The light unending of the days of June—
Springs in us, and a passion of regret and pain,
Known not, when flow'r by flow'r was followed
soon.

For we too know an endless season is not ours,
And e'en as this year's leaves the ditches fill;
We too will drift, when comes the failing of our
pow'rs,
Unto the little graveyard 'neath the hill.

O hands that tire! O eyes that are in seeing spent,
Would ye for ever act, for ever see?
O hearts that love! when love's best instruments
are bent,
Will ye not pass and let the worthier be?

For they that would win joy must work with fleshly
tools,
And flesh but little time contains its breath;
The score is made by heeding well the pastime's
rules,
And life is purchased at the price of death.

But here is peace, spread with the leaves of autumn
trees,

Upon the little sward beneath the hill ;
Here many friends have found their everlasting ease
Soothed by the robin's elegy so shrill.

And who will say that may not silent death like
sleep,

Deepest delight, like love's still ecstasy,
Like every rapture speechless at its topmost steep,
Reveal the infinite eternity ?

SONGS AND POEMS.

WILD BIRDS.

(IN AUTUMN.)

WILD birds flying in the night,
Wild birds crying in their flight,
Pass above the city bright.

Wearied of their strife and sin
Now the streets have ceased their din,
All are sleeping safe within.

But I hear the wild birds call,
Sad and sweet the wild notes fall,
Then is silence over all.

Sweet birds from the summer hills,
Living as your fancy wills,
Innocent of all our ills !

In the far secluded glen,
On the high-exalted ben,
Knowing not the sight of men !

Sad birds now that ye must go,
Exiled by your ancient foe
Winter, from the land of snow !

Wild birds flying through the night,
Wild birds crying in your flight
Up among the stars so bright.

We have felt your sorrow too,
And with longing wail anew
Heav'n that we have lost like you.

A LOVERS' DAWN IN JUNE.

Serenade :

“THE sea all a shimmer lies—
A tranquil mere ;
Dawn with her angel eyes
Draws yet more near ;
The moon like a golden bloom
Sweetens the air,
Hanging where scented gloom
The lilacs fair.

“The sea like thy tender heart
In dreams asleep,
Seems to forget the smart
Once made her weep.

Dewdrops upon the grass
Begin to gleam,
Each as a mirror 'twas
Of thy pure dream.

“ Say, love ! does not there stir
Within thine ear
Flutings from yonder fir,
Where faintly clear
The thrush song is wakening ?
O, soon, like spray,
From every bush will spring
The sweet bird lay !

“ Thou art the song so sweet,
The dawn must wait !
Beauty for thee 'tis meet
To recreate !

Wake, love ! it is the morn
We trysted true
To meet here beside the thorn
At early dew."

Solo :

" Hero of all my dreams !
How sweet thy words
Mingled with quickening beams
And murmuring birds !
How sweet my reliance whole
On thee to lay,
As twilight resigns her soul
To glorious day !

" Once when I heard the voice
Of dawning day,
Ah, then I shunned the choice
To roam away ;

Now in the wilderness
What need I fear ?
The dark wood is dangerless
When thou art near."

Duet :

"Is it the eastern skies'
Gleam in thy dusky eyes,
Or true love's light that lies
Aglowing there ?
Fresh as the fields in June,
Mystic as ancient rune,
Sweet as the sweetest tune
Is love, and fair !

"Over the fields we'll stray ;
White steps the virgin day
Out o'er the glimmering bay,
O'er the young grass.

Into deep dens and through
Where 'neath night's quenching dew
Flames yet the broom anew,
O! we will pass.

“ Blossoms the hawthorn crowd,
White as the white June cloud,
Up where the lark is loud
With boisterous song.
Freedom of winds begun
Through the long grass to run,
Joy of the quenchless sun
To us belong ! ”

JUNE.

Soon, soon, the mavis cries,
 Soon will the Spring be over ;
The blackbird soft replies—
 Soon over, soon over !

The cherry tree that waved
 Her scented blossoms sweet,
And wanton white arms laved
 In the streamlet at her feet,
 Is faded now and over.

Gone now from mossy nook
 The tender sorrel chalice,
The primrose by the brook,
 And all her violet allies.

With gowans many a brae is white,
Anemones once starred,
And all the river haughs are bright
With dazzling daisied sward.

Swift past the lovely days have chased,
Each one deserved her song ;
Then O, my soul, with music haste
And raise a pæan strong.

Nor lingering in voiceless ease,
Quaffing Spring's nectar stay,
As in the flower-cups the bees
Still quench their merry lay.

FANCY.

As we came through the hills together
My love and I, at eventide,
We passed a haunt amid the heather
Where many mournful wildfowl cried ;
It was the time when sunset died—
Died the demise of summer weather,
The scouring swifts around us plied,
Startling our hearts with shuddering feather.

We lingered in that lonely haunt
To say our sad farewell to-day,
The weaned lambs so lone for want
Of former warmth called woefully ;

The gauzy flies in flickering spray
 Blew o'er the ground in golden vaunt,
Until withdrew the gliding ray
 And all the land was grey and gaunt.

And, as we sate among the heather,
 We pitied the poor feeble fly
That in the deep of summer weather
 After one day's delight must die ;
The lambs and birds of mournful cry
 We mourned, and our own short life's tether,
But nought we feared, my love and I,
 If only we could die together.

WINTER SKETCH.

THE wintry day goes down
With purple wings into the west,
Darkness with plumage brown
Steals to its snowy nest.

O'er bushes by the brook,
Crammed hand and mouth with store of snow,
A bird from nook to nook
Goes flitting to and fro.

And by the water's edge
A woman nigh as winter old,
Gathers among the sedge
Firewood to fend the cold.

Haste bird and beldame grey !

The evening blink is gulfed by night,
Galaxies frostily
Peer from the heaven's height.

Brief is the time for work,

Long the starry hosts' chill reign
Never a second to shirk
Till day revives again.

A NEW ASTROLOGY.

STARS in the old tree-top !
Wintry trees the dark sky darkening !
Breezes of fitful stop
Voicing around my home !
Fruitage bright of the tree,
Stars unto the breezes hearkening !
Breezes whose minstrelsy
Upward to heav'n hath clomb !

Is there indeed accord
Fixed and fitful between you twain ?
Is there one spirit lord
Over your diverse notes ?
And the tree that idle stands
Knows its summer's work not vain,

Waiting with empty hands
While winter o'er it floats ?

Flowers about its root,
Sleep in their chambers of chilly clay ;
Its blossom and its fruit
Lies a speck in the bud ;
Yet with the stars of night,
Its dark tresses are jewelled gay ;
Trembling a still delight
Thrills through its frozen blood.

Stars of the wintry sky !
Trees unto the glad stars reaching !
Breezes with hushed reply
Calling around my roof !
How shall I come to know
All the harmony you are teaching ?
Courage with faith to go
On to my destiny's proof ?

ROMANCE.

THE birds are silent in the dell,
But the wind is loud and the trees are bowed,
A sound there is of dirge and knell

And the day is dying.

The knight paused by that green holt-side

“ Alas, my page, true the presage ;

E'en now my lady-love hath died

And low is lying.”

“ O, oft there is a storm in May—

My master dear !—lose not thy cheer !

But leaves to June a brighter day

And fairer flowers.”

“The morn arose with wail and moan ;
The plovers harsh called from the marsh ;
All, all too late, my gallant roan
 Thou’st reached those towers !

Her flow’rs would not lie broken so,
The water fast, run shuddering past,
The wind like angered army go,
 Were my love living.
For some there’s yet a fairer day ;
Oh, unto some then let it come !
For me the turmoil and the fray
 And no forgiving ! ”

SUMMER.

AFTER it's over I'll sing you a song,
A song of the noon so blue,
Of the scented twilight long
And the morning pure with dew.

For a poem is every strong sun ray,
Rich music the blossom hung,
And when great Life makes melody
'Tis mute must be my tongue.

But after the glory is over and gone
And left but a memory,
As in the midnight north then shone
Some relics of the day,

O, then I will sing you a song !
A song of the summer's prime,
Will make you weary and long
With tears for that sweet time.

SPRING SONG.

BEFORE the first flow'r dies
And lays her beauty's light upon the ground,
While later blooms in cradling bud sleep sound
Let song arise !

Now longer dwells each day
And gladness lingers with the lingering light,
And men believe that joy grown infinite
Will alway stay.

The bold March wind hales out
The slain leaves that in wintry graves have slept,
But, now young buds out on the twigs have crept,
We'll heed them not.

SONG.

Among the lonely mountains
Where many valleys meet,
And many silver streamlets
Mingle their waters sweet
 Is a spot I dearly love.
There many ridges intertwine
With linked arms, O, lovingly ;
I gaze and gaze where faint they blend
With melting azure far away,
 And my heart too melts with love.

Now the pellucid vale
A gush of sunlight fills ;
I see the yellow whin
Upon the lower hills
 Like a blue flower's heart of gold.

The golden gorse is blossoming ;
I see a streamlet sparkling leap ;
My love is smiling, well I know,
She dwells in yonder hollow deep
 The shadowy heights enfold.

A blossom's azure chalice,
That glen where sunbeams fleet ;
My love is as the perfume
That makes the flow'r so sweet—
 My love in the flower-vale's heart.
O, love amid the bosoming hills
That makest dear the countryside !
The thought of thee a fragrance is
That in my life will aye abide !
 So excellent thou art !

THE DIM MOOR.

THE curlews from the dim moor call
 O my love ! my love ! from the sunny moor ;
The sunbeams on the dim moor fall ;
 Oh ! richly, richly do they pour.
The moor sways like an ocean floor
Where brood the sunbeams over all,
 And the curlews call so sweetly.

We will go to the dim dim moor, .
 O my love ! my love ! where milky white
The wind-flower stars the heather o'er
 The heather soft ! O what delight
To lie while bees with droning flight,
Weave meshes of melodious lore
 To bind our souls so sweetly !

The wild moor where the wild curlew
 O love ! O my love ! is wailing, wailing
O, I must leave it, it and you,
 Although the sunlight be not paling
And wild birds evermore be sailing,
And call from the unstinted blue
 So sadly and so sweetly !

ELEGY.

A few pale hours of the wan early sun,
A few low sighs from the mild southern wind ;
And through earth's bosom is a trembling gone—
The first awakening after slumber blind.

And first the snowdrops stirred in the sour mould
Bursting with gentle force the clay's chill mass ;
And oped their bosoms to the night-dews cold,
Decking with angel white the grey-green grass.

Now in a constellation o'er thy grave,
Symbols of thy pure soul to all who gaze ;
A sisterhood of innocence they wave,
Beneath the strengthening sun and bright star-
maze.

Bright are those fiery spangles ; a strong soul,
Is their upholder through the world's great year ;
But thou'rt as constant while our years unroll,
Breathes in those first few flow'rs thy spirit dear.

Soon will they haste away before the rush
Of gayer blooms, thick from earth's quickened
heart ;
As thou departed'st ere youth's fuller flush,
Ere life's fierce pleasures could thy heart unrest.

Now tenderer light upon the horizon dwells
And clouds of evening softer glories gild ;
Breaks forth like stifled flames from all our dells,
And copses dark, the song-bird's music wild.

So, while keen hearts are thrilling with spring's
breath,
And for the summer pant, I'll bid farewell ;
After October's ruin, winter's death,
This cross of white of hope and thee will tell.

A DREAM.

I DREAMED I wandered up a steep hillside
At eventide, and on my way I sped,
While gathering gloom began the land to hide,
At first through pleasant fields the pathway led,
But soon through heather rank and mosses deep,
Where in the black haggs slept the waters dead.
Anon I clambered up a rocky steep,
Nor saw the crags and boulders for the night
That o'er my eyes her sable robe made sweep.
An ancient forest crowned the mountain's height,
And, through its gloomy vaults I seemed to tread
Where not a grey birch glimmered to the sight,
But all unseen the leaves a rustling made
Like gibbering of ghosts that wandering go,
Or traitors' whispers deep in ambush laid.

But from this dark tomb as I issued—lo !
A silvery radiance flashed upon my sight,
And all the east was lit with pearly glow.
The vale below was filled with mystic light
That hovered o'er the grass with dewdrops gray,
And trembled on the streamlet's bosom bright.
But O ! that light was not the light of day
Nor lovely dawn with her more tender hue,
But in a solemn trance the landscape lay,
And field and tree and flower drenched with dew ;
A sacred beauty wore in that pure ray
That streamed adown the cloudy avenue.

Again I dreamed and now I seemed to lie
On an October stubble brown and bare,
While gusts of western wind came wandering by,
But sought in vain the flow'rs that once were there,
And earth and sky were desolate and still,
Save where some finches chattered through the air.

An autumn haze was over plain and hill
That soiled the flaming woodland's robe of pride,
And seemed the land with weariness to fill.
My heart was weary too and oft I sighed,
Athinking of the summer's beauty gone
Like one in whom all hope and joy have died.
But as I gazed the dreary scene upon,
Rolling from heav'n to earth mine aching eyes,
Amid the stubble daisies peeped and shone,
And tender spires of grass began arise
Waving and sparkling in the sunlight new,
And clothed the faded fields in spring-like guise.
Now in the heavens smiled the lovely blue,
Now from the hedgerow burst the throstle's song,
And sounds of gladness flocked the bright air
through,
But ah ! ne'er came spring joys in such rich throng ;
Such soft winds blew not and such flow'rs ne'er grew,
Nor felt I e'er the joy of life so strong.

Yet once again a vision to me came,
And now upon a bed of pain I lay,
While cruel tortures agonized my frame.
Some fell disease had marked me for its prey
And, as an eagle rends the tender hare,
So did it tear my flesh intent to slay,
Or as a python leaps from out its lair
Upon a fawn, and with its dire caress
Crushes the breath from out the creature fair,
So did this malady upon me press.
Wildly I wrestled with my throttling foe
To sink at last out-worn and powerless ;
And as I struggled in life's latest throe,
A surging billow o'er me seemed to pass,
That drowned all sense in its black overflow.
And so I lay beneath the seething mass,
Lifeless as seaweed 'neath the wintry wave,
Unconscious as a root beneath the grass.
But, as I slumbered dead as in the grave,
Began a gleam of life in me to wake,

And from afar a melody most suave
Like moonlight parting mist my slumber brake.
Oft through dissolving dreams at morning time
I've heard the wild birds their sweet tumult make,
And oft on upland moor I've marked the chime
Come sweet and solemn from the hollow glen ;
But ne'er before was music so sublime !
And oh ! the sights of beauty I saw then !
Not springtide sunlight through the tender leaves,
Nor summer sunset purpling o'er the ben,
Nor lake that 'neath the moonlight sways and heaves
Could hope in loveliness with them to vie.
Oh ! ne'er on earth the eye such sights perceives
For these were hues of immortality,
And whoso in their glory once believes,
Recks not of earth nor things of earthly dye.

SERENADE.

(Amor Maris Infelicitis.)

WHEN the sea hath left from sighing
And the stars no longer throb ;
When the seabirds cease their crying
And the wild sea-winds to sob,
Then shall I have ceased to love thee,
O, my love !

To earth's hem creeps up the ocean,
Lovelorn bows his weary head,
But repulsed with chiding motion
Glides back to his troubled bed.
Hear thou me unworthy of thee
O, my love !

Wistfully the ocean lingers

At earth's feet casts plumes of spray,
Robes of foam by nereids' fingers

Wrought in sea-halls far away.

I've nought but a heart to love thee

O, my love !

THE TRANQUIL BAY.

WE stood beside the tranquil bay,
As tranquil was my love-brimmed breast ;
Where seemed a subtle mood to play
As on the tide the tinted west.

But swift a breeze the mirror broke,
The waves leaped in tumultuous bliss ;
And O, the joy that in me woke
At the sweet onset of thy kiss !

The ripples hurried to the shore,
The foam bells chimed upon the beach ;
Love on my heart in billows bore
And broke upon my lips in speech.

My surging heart will ne'er be still,
But louder voice thy beauty's wonder,
From tiniest wavelet's tinkling peal,
To sounding sea-caves' organ thunder !

A MINING TOWN.

FOR once dissolved the grime and haze
That dims with motes the city's sight,
Old bustling Boreas clears the gaze
And burnishes anew each light.
And through the crystal evening soon,
Shine o'er the darkening vale I scan
Streets in long line, towns in platoon—
The sparkling armament of man.
Lamps in a coruscating row
Tense trembling like a violin string
Seem musical, the furnace throe
Less like a striving evil thing,
And through the airy singing streets,
I ween, a happy people fleets.

RONDEAU (ST. ANDREWS.)

ALONG the sands to Edenside
In waning light at eventide,
We'll walk and see the grey waves break
And broken ruined clouds that make
In flight across the ocean wide.

Shells that the brown beach beautified
Frail roofs whose tenant lives have died,
Shatter at every step we take
 Along the sands,
A harsh good-night the gull hath cried ;
The wind for the day's death hath sighed,
And we, who live, nor know how ache
Those hearts whom their last hopes forsake,
Yet sadden gazing pensive-eyed
 Along the sands.

BALLADE.

WHEN March winds blow and hurrying dust
 Makes golden mists before the sun,
And motes into our eyes are thrust,
 Then a year's mischief is begun.
For oh ! the March winds in their fun
 Blow more than motes into our eyes—
Troubles that give to many a one
 Both bitter smart and sweet surprise.

Out on Earth's bare and parched crust,
 The laughing crocus bands have run,
And brighter frocks the maidens trust
 To wear, now that the winter's done.

Fairer than flow'rs or fabrics spun
The beauty in their smile that lies,
But oft-time brings the smile that's won
Both bitter smart and sweet surprise.

Oh some will moan as moan one must,
Crushed 'neath a weight of many a ton,
And some will sink away in rust,
Or seek release with knife or gun,
And some look black as heathen Hun
And wish the world a quick demise,
While some will ward with rhyme and pun
The bitter smart and sweet surprise.

ENVOY.

Lady! though cruel love may stun,
And, while he gladdens us, chastise,
Is there a mortal who would shun
The bitter smart and sweet surprise?

RONDEAU.

Across the lake so calm and gray,
That mirrors the calm wintry day,
And 'mid the dusk and wintry trees
That fringe the waters 'neath the leas,
Thy dwelling lies a mile away.

And gazing often do I say
The calm lake is a simile
Of thee who dwellest sweet in ease
 Across the lake.
The deep tree shadows on the bay
That ne'er are broken by the breeze,
Thine eyelashes ; the dreameries
Of light and shade thine eyes calm gray ;
Thy life that clear tranquillity
 Across the lake.

CHRISTMAS.

PRETTY maidens could we thus
 Happy chatting ever live,
 While the firelight winks at us,
 Toss'd kisses seems to give !

Tidy gowns and slippered toes !
 Ribbons round your locks that play !—
 Through your veins the bright blood goes
 Kindling beauty on its way.

Pretty maidens could we only
 Happy chatting ever sit !
 When we're saddened, old and lonely,
 This night—we'll remember it !

SHAKESPEARIAN SONNET.

WHEN Autumn comes with mellowing of leaves,
That golden flutter down the golden air,
And the fields' wealth is girded up in sheaves,
That husbandmen lead home with hurrying care,

When sun-fed apples from their perch are reft,
And squirrels make of hazel-nuts their hoards,
Then, when all flesh enjoys the season's gift,
A harvest feast to me too it affords ;

For then I gather up the bright year's fruits—
The rich experience of the Summer day,
The Spring's keen rapture 'mid its tender shoots,
And many a flowery pleasure by the way—

These ripened well within my verses lie
All garnered safe to be the soul's supply.

SONNETS.

I.—THESIS.

To roam the world culling each summer's day
Like nosegay, or like sweet-meat on the tongue
Enjoying it, is fault of ardour young
That thinks not how all beauty must decay,
Or sensual appetites that ever say
The moment's bliss is all in life that's good.
But, joy once past, our spirits crave for food,
Nor have we aught our hunger's pangs to stay.

But he who can in poesy distil
The fragrance of the heather and the rose,
Nor in a dreamy pleasure swoons, but knows
To gaze into the eyes of morning till
He sees the image of eternal joy,
Hath learned to smile on fleeting Time's annoy.

II.—ANTITHESIS.

The perished loveliness who can restore
Of blossoms passed, or give to winter skies
Their old-time glory, or before mine eyes
One draught of wasted summer sunlight pour?
For 'twixt the pages of poetic lore
Are naught but flowers pressed, nor to the sight
Did ever pigments dull give that delight
I feel when roaming the broad mountains o'er,

To gaze on the delicious melting hues
Of distant hills, sun-dappled moorland near,
To marvel at each flower's perfect being
And jewel-pavèd pools of streamlet clear.
Wonders so exquisite I'd only choose
To gaze and gaze and live for aye in seeing.

EPISTOLA AD AMICOS.

FRIENDS ! on this night of blackened sky,
From his chill sconce on upland high,
Your exiled friend of rustic muse
Afar your gleaming city views,
And sees round her tiaraed head
The softly tinted halo spread,
Gilding the clouds with constant dawn.
The nearer streets in parallel drawn
Stand forth alert with many a lamp
The steady watch-fires of your camp ;
Up to that clear illumined beach
An inky ocean seems to reach ;
Like pioneers in savage land
Those bright and trim battalions stand,
Or, as intelligences clear,
The symbols of your minds appear.

So must the poet far removed
From haunts of joy he erst hath proved,
When winter and confederate night
Have banished from the country quite
Her former grace, and he alone
On farm, nor Sabine, nor his own,
Wanders the darksome country lanes,
Feel weary of the fate that chains
Him to the clods and sodden ways,
And with regretful longing gaze
Upon your shining city life,
Where laughter and quick thought are rife,
Where in your halls of play and song
Bright eyes and happy faces throng ;
There's fine attire and Venus form
And music, now in surging storm,
Now languishing upon the flute ;
But here the leafless woods are mute,
And first, attire must fend the mud
And beauty's but in healthy blood.

But now your distant steeple chimes,
Your routs and festivals close betimes ;
The ways are vacant ; I had forgot
The obverse of your jocund lot.
All night the restless engine howls ;
Around your streets the lust-wolf prowls,
The drunkard reels to his gutter couch,
The burglar lurks with stealthy slouch,
The outcast settles down to die,
And the filthy flood spews ever by.

SCOTS SONG.

A LIGHT upon the faded bent
On yonder hill expiring lies,
Whaur aft in simmer-time we went
When whaups were waefu' wi' their cries.

Doun the glen ! Doun the glen !
Up the brae and back again ;
Come the gait that weel ye ken,
For I am wae and weary, O !

Now deid upon the hill's the licht,
And down the glen it duskens grey ;
The shadowy eldritch hosts o' nicht
Come pouring ilka corrie frae.

Doun the glen ! Doun the glen !
 Owre the brae and through the den !
 I will watch for thee fu' fain
 Amang the darkness eerie, O !

Glow'rin up the burnside bare,
 Nocht but the thickening gloom to spy ;
 Listening, naething can I hear
 But like a ghaist the far linn sigh.

Doun the glen ! Doun the glen !
 Up the brae and back again !
 Come, for O ! ye little ken
 How duif I am and dreary, O !

Inby, beside the ingle bricht
 The lave are blithe, but I wait lang
 To hear the burn row through the nicht
 Wi' aye the same sad weirdfu' sang.

Doun the glen ! Doun the glen !
Owre the brae and through the den !
Come to me but ance again
My ae, my ae fond dearie, O !

ANCIENT HIGHLAND SONG.

DONE INTO LOWLAND SCOTS.

IN the spring of the year the wee birds assemble
On the taps o' the trees in yon rocky glen,
And dance through the air to the wee notes sae
nimble,

And draw from the grey craigs music again ;
Oh, ilka ane to the ither is kind,
But I and my true love the further are twined !

Oh, the blossoming whin wi' its yellow hinny-kaims
Is a chamber of feast to the revelling bees ;
And the lambs and the leverets can play their canny
games

The lang day through on the level leas.
But a' their joy brings but sorrow to my mind,
For I and my true love the further are twined !

See yon flow'ring thorn in the rocky wilderness,
Wi' robes sae pure flowing owre his wrinkled
limbs;

O, gin it were the priest that could us bless
At the altar o' God 'mang the singing hymns!
Sae close and sae near as he suld us bind,
But we, O my true love, the further are twined l

SCOTS SONG.

THE mists rove frae hill to hill,
 The deer gang wanderin',
 The blithe bird sings where'er he will,
 The burns rin daunderin'.

Oh, the hill ! the bonnie hill-side !
 And yon burn clear !
 And a' the day or mair to bide !
 For wha will speir ?

There's mony a neuk by mony a linn
 Where the birk grows and the bracken ;
 It's blithe to sleep by the burnie's din
 And blithe aye to wauken.

Oh, the berries, the berries blae !
On yon heuch hie,
And oh the merry, the merry day
For you and me !

The world's a pleasant place and gay
Wi' flow'rs sae bricht,
Wi' laverocks owerheid by day
And starns by nicht.

But dinna be speirin' at us to tell
Where we hae been !
The birk-tree and the heather bell,
O, they hae seen !

THE END.

